

Review the process for the word exploration strategy.

1. Complete the activity (actually write as yourself, not a student, using the freewriting technique) using the prompt: *middle school years*.

2. Attach your freewriting sample

3. Submit a brief summary of how you, as a reading specialist, would use this technique with secondary teachers.

Prompt: middle school years - original

When I was in middle school I can remember feeling lost in the new school. I had a crush on a boy who didn't like me and was always concerned with fitting in. I like to dress nicely and dressed up most of the time. I also remember wearing hip huggers and shirts way above my belly button. Now that kind of dress is unheard of, how much freer we were then than it is today. I can also remember joining sports such as hockey, cross country and I tried out for basketball. I didn't like basketball or hockey. I wasn't good in either sport. I didn't like cross country either but I did like track. I stayed in track for many years. I was given the nickname that I can't recall why. The boy who gave me the nickname was popular so it stuck throughout high school and college. I was in color guard for a few years.

Reflection:

I timed myself for 5 minutes. I'm not the best typist so I corrected my errors. I wasn't sure if it was allowed so I kept the original above.

Prompt: middle school years - revised

When I was in middle school I can remember feeling lost in the new school. I had a crush on a boy who didn't like me and was always concerned with fitting in. I like to dress nicely and dressed up most of the time. I also remember wearing hip huggers and shirts way above my belly button. Now that kind of dress is unheard of, how much freer we were then than it is today. I can also remember joining sports such as hockey, cross country and I tried out for basketball. I didn't like basketball or hockey. I wasn't good in either sport. I didn't like cross country either but I did like track. I stayed in

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track for many years. I was given a nickname that I can't recall why. The boy who gave me the nick name was popular so it stuck throughout school and college. I was in color guard for a few years.

As a reading specialist I would introduce this strategy to secondary teachers. I would explain to them that students use of a dictionary to look up so called "vocabulary words" for the unit is not beneficial unless they need to verify their predictions. What is beneficial is to have students brainstorm what the word means then have a class discussion on the meaning and relate it to the content being studied. Word exploration is one way to assess what the students know about a word and allows for activating prior knowledge and engagement in learning for meaning.

Currently, my daughter, who is in 8th grade, has to look up vocabulary words in social studies for homework. The class then has a test on them next week. As she looks up the words I can see her frustration and lack of interest. After reading chapter 5, I have a whole new outlook in the use of a dictionary. Using strategies such as word exploration, brainstorming, word sorts etc. make sense and are great strategies to help students better understand the content being taught. I think the text book in general should be read by all secondary teachers to give them instructional strategies to use in the classroom and to phase out "old school teaching".